

HOLDING THE MOMENT

Artist Narratives

February 15, 2021 - March 20, 2021



Heidi Alanzo | *Leading Lines*: This artwork was painted while sheltering-in-place early on during the COVID-19 pandemic. Walks, permissible under the quarantine, eased my loneliness. The ever-present appearance of telephone poles remind me of what connects us to each other, not only physically, but also emotionally. For those at high risk with medical conditions, telephone, internet, and cellular communications have been our means of safely staying in touch with the world and family.



José Luis Andrade | *Los Imprescindibles (The Essential) Diary*: This piece pays homage to the people who have risked the most precious gift, life. It is part of a never-ending diary of my work that I conceived as a 60-piece mini watercolor installation. Here the integrity of the work, and its subjects, is translated into a smaller juxtaposition of a few of the watercolors.



I don't like corona virus.
I wear a mask so I won't
spread germs. I miss going
on vacation. I miss being
with my friends. I miss
being at the beach.
Gather your family
go to the park.
Ixchel

Alicia Aldama | *Ixchel*: In these first months of quarantine I was curious to find out what children actually know about COVID-19. What have they heard? How has it affected them? While a lot of information can be captured in a photograph, the children's handwritten perspectives in the composition reminds us that they have voices. Children may not fully understand what is going on, but their words are important to the collective conversation; they are meaningful and deserve to be heard.



Richard Choi | *Jung, Nurse*: New contradictions emerged during the first weeks of COVID-19: non-essential versus essential workers; the feelings of actively contributing versus the importance of sheltering-in-place; digital connection versus meeting in person. Jung, an old high school friend I had lost touch with, posted this selfie on social media during these first weeks of the quarantine. I was struck by his expression of surprise and determination through the sterile blue-green glare of the face shield. We reconnected over this portrait--a small gift of appreciation for him.



Brian Sal Corral | *The Distance*: As we move forward, not knowing the distance ahead, it is easy to feel defeated. I am inspired by a friend who, at the beginning of the quarantine lost his job. He started long distance running for his mental health. Month 3 of quarantine he ran 100 miles -- no stopping and no sleep. Around the 90th mile he was so exhausted he started running the wrong way. Upon finishing he said, "I actually ran 101 miles!" Whenever I feel lost I envision him running forward not knowing when or where the exact finish will be, but with confidence that he will make it there.






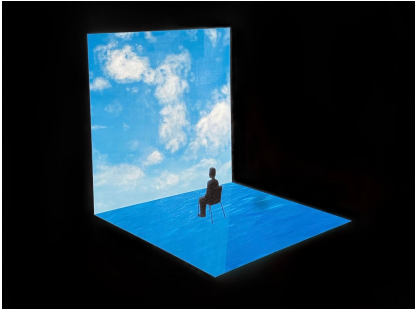




Sebzilla | *Stay Indoors*: “Stay Indoors” is a reflection on the mental strain some of us went through during the riots. Trying to find sanity. Orders to stay indoors at odds with the need to go outside and stand with the community.



Binh Dahn | *View of Bernal Heights and 101/280 Interchange*: This contemporary daguerreotype view, taken on 7/29/20 at 4 PM, depicts the state of quarantine, an empty freeway interchange, and houses with families sheltering-in-place. This view harkens back to the San Francisco Gold Rush days of the 1850s, the 1906 San Francisco earthquake and fire, or the 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake—it all summoned catastrophe and the shaping of the Bay Area.



Julie Engelbrecht | *Pandemic Remnants #2 Chaos, Destruction, Order & Beauty*: The Sewing the World Safe series is fabricated from the fabric remnants of the masks I have been making to donate. Running the fabric through my overlock sewing machine I can make a dozen an hour. The marvelous fuzzy fabric remnants from the expedited process inspired this artwork created from 150 masks made for service workers supporting our homeless population. Out of chaos and destruction, comes order and beauty.

	<p>Lee Oscar Gomez <i>Black Lives Matter in San José:</i> This photograph was captured during a Black Lives Matter event at San José City Hall, summer 2020. Photographed on 35mm black and white film and the negative was edited with a solarization effect. By doing this, the heat and volume of the moment is emphasized, as is the dire state of systemic racism rampant in our country’s institutions. I wish to amplify and shine light on what matters. I darkened the images to protect an individual's identity, and highlight the movements, silhouettes, and text that are representing the Black Lives Matter movement.</p>
	<p>Lee Oscar Gomez <i>Welcome to San José:</i> As a photographer, it is my duty to capture honesty without manipulation. I came to San José to pursue my photographic career. As a new resident, I was careful while documenting the streets. I found a sense of belonging in San José – it is a place of authenticity. This photograph was taken to capture lifestyles among San José residents.</p>
	<p>Amy Hibbs <i>Grapefruit:</i> COVID-19 has highlighted our physical vulnerability and tested our mental strength. The yard waste piles reflect the turmoil I feel during this time. If the symmetrical plantings of well-kept yards are aspirational, the debris piles are the truth-decay, death, regeneration, and an accounting of our debt to, and our distance from, the natural world. The debris piles are our rejected medicines.</p>
	<p>Darren Naylor <i>Shelter in Place:</i> Shelter-in-place has forced us all to remain relatively dormant, viewing the outside world from the seat of our homes. It also seems to have heightened our senses in regard to appreciating the outside world more than ever. The sky seems bluer, the air feels fresher, and walks outside have become the highlight of the day.</p>
	<p>Samuel Rodriguez <i>Eres Esencial (Grocery Workers):</i> A dedication to our Essential Workers during the COVID-19 pandemic.</p>
	<p>Joe Saxe <i>A Reminder:</i> For many years, San José has been an increasingly expensive place to live. Many artists, service workers, self-employed, and unemployed people have struggled to just cling to the edge of affording a place to live. The economic disruption of the COVID-19 virus is pushing many over that edge, and forcing them to make hard decisions about whether to stay in San José or leave. But some have few or no choices and will face financial ruin or even homelessness.</p>
	<p>Masha Schultz <i>Floating Atop:</i> These months of sheltering-in-place have been dark. I witnessed my father's death. We were close. I grieve. Others also grieve the loss of their loved ones. Many grieve. Together we witnessed beautiful lightning storms; in their aftermath wildfires raged through communities. Red skies. Tragic devastation. This work, while dark, reminds of the light that endures during dark times, losses, and lessons.</p>
	<p>Alyssa Wigant <i>Go Easy On Yourself:</i> These seemingly simple words act as a powerful reminder that we must have compassion for ourselves during this collective lifestyle change the pandemic has caused. For many, the only thing left within our control is how we treat ourselves, so we must treat ourselves gently. To create this piece I showed my Instagram followers a list of phrases and asked what they needed to read most at this moment. Quotes included: “Empathy Will Save The World,” “ Times Are Tough, But So Are You,” “The Only Way Out Is Through,” and more.” Go Easy on Yourself” was most well received.</p>
<p>Images may be cropped to fit this narrative format. To view the full image, please visit the exhibition or online: www.sanjoseca.gov/HoldingTheMomentSJ.</p>	